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# **EXHIBIT 7**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS REPORT at pg.  
27 (2007)**

# **EXHIBIT 7**

## THE TIERS

### **TIER 1**

Countries whose governments fully comply with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's (TVPA) minimum standards

### **TIER 2**

Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards

### **TIER 2 WATCH LIST**

Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards  
AND:

- a) The absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing; or
- b) There is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year; or
- c) The determination that a country is making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with minimum standards was based on commitments by the country to take additional future steps over the next year.

### **TIER 3**

Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so

Child soldiers are a global phenomenon. The problem is most critical in Africa and Asia, but armed groups in the Americas and the Middle East also unlawfully use children in conflict areas. All nations must work together with international organizations and NGOs to take urgent action to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate child soldiers.

### **Sex Trafficking and Prostitution**

Sex trafficking is considered the largest specific subcategory of transnational modern-day slavery. Sex trafficking would not exist without the demand for commercial sex flourishing around the world. The U.S. Government adopted a strong position against prostitution in a December 2002

policy decision, which states that prostitution is inherently harmful and dehumanizing and fuels trafficking in persons.

Prostitution and related activities—including pimping and patronizing or maintaining brothels—encourage the growth of modern-day slavery by providing a façade behind which traffickers for sexual exploitation operate. Where prostitution is tolerated, there is a greater demand for human trafficking victims and nearly always an increase in the number of women and children trafficked into commercial sex slavery. Few women seek out or choose to be in prostitution, and most are desperate to leave it. A 2003 scientific study in the *Journal of Trauma Practice* found that 89 percent of women in prostitution want to escape prostitution but had no other options for survival.

# EXHIBIT 8

**RONALD B. FLOWERS, PROSTITUTION IN THE DIGITAL AGE: SELLING SEX FROM THE SUITE TO THE STREET? at pg. 42-46 (Praeger 2011)**

# EXHIBIT 8

## 42 Prostitution in the Digital Age

avenues.<sup>18</sup> Most of these are prostitutes working in brothels, massage parlors, private health clubs, or saunas “in practically every reasonably-sized town and city across the country, whether in the guise of a private flat or house, or run on more commercial and professional lines.”<sup>19</sup> Studies show that there is a high incidence of HIV infection, physical assaults, and homicides among United Kingdom prostitutes.<sup>20</sup> Other research has yielded comparable findings with respect to prostitution-involved individuals practicing their trade in countries with legal prostitution but illegal procurement, as well as illegal prostitution.<sup>21</sup>

### Legal Prostitution in Nevada

Prostitutes can operate legally in the United States in regulated brothels inside the state of Nevada, with prostitution banned in the rest of the country.<sup>22</sup> The brothels are all located in rural counties with populations of less than 400,000. Currently there are 28 legal brothels in the state with names such as Angel’s Ladies, Moonlite BunnyRanch, Sue’s Fantasy Club, Shady Lady Ranch, and the World Famous Mustang Ranch. These brothels are spread out over eight counties, with four other counties legally able to issue licenses.<sup>23</sup> This does not include Clark County where Las Vegas is located, or Washoe County where Reno is located.

Legal brothel prostitution in Nevada is a lucrative enterprise, bringing in about \$75 million in revenue annually.<sup>24</sup> However, the illegal sex-for-sale business in Las Vegas alone brings in an estimated \$5 billion each year.<sup>25</sup> According to an investigation of female sex workers in America by ABC News, there are around 1,000 women working as independent contractors at legal brothels in Nevada, but only about 300 are active in the legal sex trade at any given time.<sup>26</sup> By comparison, an estimated 10,000 females ply the trade illegally in Las Vegas.<sup>27</sup> Licensed brothel prostitution-engaged women “work a legally mandated minimum of nine days for each work period.”<sup>28</sup>

Perhaps the most well-known legal brothel in Nevada is the World Famous Mustang Ranch.<sup>29</sup> First called the Mustang Bridge Ranch, in 1971 it was Nevada’s first brothel to be licensed, paving the way for legal prostitution in the state. Spread out over 166 acres in Storey County and yielding the most profits among brothels, the Mustang Ranch was “forfeited to the federal government in 1999 following [the owner Joe] Conforte’s convictions for tax fraud, racketeering, and other crimes. It was auctioned off and reopened five miles to the east under the same name but different ownership.”<sup>30</sup>

Today the World Famous Mustang Ranch is a multimillion dollar enterprise that's "run with sophistication and a keen eye on the profit margin."<sup>31</sup> Described as being "like a small compound, tucked away off the highway and surrounded by mountains," the brothel has its own Web site with an "erotic menu," to "feed your desires and fantasies," with such entrees as "Straight Lay," "Two Girl Show," and "Menage a Trois."<sup>32</sup> *Love Ranch*, a 2010 motion picture starring Academy Award winner Helen Mirren, was based somewhat on the Mustang Ranch and the lives of Joe Conforte and his wife Sally.<sup>33</sup>

Another well-known Nevada legal brothel is the Moonlite BunnyRanch, which first opened its doors in Carson City in 1955 as the Moonlight Ranch.<sup>34</sup> The brothel, owned by Dennis Hof, was the basis of two HBO America Undercover documentaries, *Cathouse* and *Cathouse 2: Back in the Saddle*, as well as the reality show *Cathouse: The Series*.<sup>35</sup>

### **The Dynamics of Legal Prostitution**

Brothel prostitutes in Nevada must be licensed, which requires the person to be 21 years of age or older, with the exception of Lyon County and Storey County, with 18 as the minimum age. The brothel's license fees to operate are anywhere from \$200 a year in Lander County to \$100,000 yearly in Storey County.<sup>36</sup> Licensed brothel prostitutes ply their trade as independent contractors and, as such, do not qualify for health benefits, unemployment, or retirement. Legal prostitutes usually tend to "work for a period of several weeks, during which time they live in the brothel and hardly ever leave it. They then take some time off."<sup>37</sup>

The health of legal prostitutes and customers is a big concern for state officials. According to Nevada law, registered brothel sex workers are required to be tested every week "(by a cervical specimen) for gonorrhea and Chlamydia trachomatis, and monthly for HIV and syphilis."<sup>38</sup> Moreover, use of condoms is mandatory for sexual intercourse and oral copulation. Brothel owners can be held liable if customers contract HIV after a licensed prostituted has tested HIV-positive. Apparently, this has not been a problem with regulated legal brothel prostitution in Nevada. The state's brothel industry has not reported a single case of HIV for one of its licensed prostitutes since mandatory testing started in the mid-1980s.<sup>39</sup> In a study of two legal brothels, it was found that "condom use in the brothels was consistent and sexually transmitted diseases were accordingly absent."<sup>40</sup> Most of the prostitutes reportedly did not use condoms in their sexual relationships outside the sex trade.

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In spite of the low rate of STDs and the generally healthier conditions in which legal brothel prostitutes work as compared to prostituted females working the streets, drug abuse appears to be as much a problem for licensed sex workers as their street-level counterparts. A prostitute for the BunnyRanch noted to this effect: “A lot of the girls here do drugs. Whether it’s illegal drugs on the street, coke, and ecstasy kind of stuff, or whether its prescription drugs, three or four Xanax to get through the day, most of them are on something.”<sup>41</sup>

#### **Earnings of Legal Brothel Prostitutes**

Legal prostitutes’ earnings vary, depending on the brothel, location, services offered, experience, and demand. In general, licensed sex workers tend to make more the closer the bordello is to Las Vegas.<sup>42</sup> For the most part, brothels do not operate with preset fees for service. Whatever their take amounts to, as independent contractors, it is the prostitute’s responsibility to pay federal income taxes (there is no Nevada state income tax). Income is reported to the IRS on form 1099-MISC. According to Wikipedia, with respect to the process of prostitute-customer business:

All but the smallest brothels operate as follows: as the customer is buzzed in and sits down in the parlor, the available women appear in a line-up and introduce themselves. If the customer chooses a woman, the price negotiations take place in the woman’s room, which are often overheard by management. The house normally gets half of the negotiated amount. If the customer arrives by cab, the driver will receive some 30% of whatever the customer spends; this is subtracted from the woman’s earnings.<sup>43</sup>

Prices for sexual services typically begin at \$200 per 15 minutes, but can go higher. According to one sex worker at the Moonlite BunnyRanch, “My rate is \$2,000 an hour for everything, \$1,000 for half an hour, \$500 for 15 minutes.”<sup>44</sup> Another claimed to make as much as \$3,000 a day at the same brothel, staying “at the ranch for weeks at a time before going home . . . in order to make ends meet and provide for her young daughter.”<sup>45</sup>

Susan Austin, the World Famous Mustang Ranch madam, indicated that some of her prostitutes offered their services for between \$10,000 and \$15,000 a night or for two days of prostituting.<sup>46</sup> Other legal brothel sex workers “may charge up to \$10,000 an hour for ‘parties’ with well-known or novelty women, or more for parties with multiple women.”<sup>47</sup>

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According to Austin, the older licensed prostitutes with more experience at her brothels tend to “command the higher rates.”<sup>48</sup>

A woman with a little age under her belt has a lot more patience. She's more versed in the business. The young girl a lot of times just starting out doesn't have all the necessary tools. That comes with age, and it comes with practice. It's like taking a rookie baseball player versus a seasoned baseball player, if you know what I mean.<sup>49</sup>

The madam noted that the “girls at the brothel love to brag about making big money; thousands a week in some cases. But the women are willing to accept less.”<sup>50</sup>

I have more ladies coming in now than I ever did before because of the economic times. They're all coming in. [It's] the only way to make some decent money in this time and age. Jobs are not that many available because of the economic times and they can make more money doing this than they can flipping burgers at McDonald's.<sup>51</sup>

According to researcher Elizabeth Joseph, based on a two-year investigation of the commercial sex trade industry, many men these days pay out a great deal of money for not just high-class sexual relations, but to enjoy what is known as the Girlfriend Experience or GFE, in which the prostitute plays the part of a well-paid girlfriend.<sup>52</sup> The prostitutes are urged to offer the GFE, as the brothel owner pimps and/or madams benefit by keeping the customers happy and the money pouring in. Hof reportedly directed his brothel sex workers to “fulfill those fantasies. Be the fantasy experience you know and create them;” while promising, “you'll be rewarded handsomely, have six figures and live happily ever after.”<sup>53</sup>

One sex worker at the Moonlite BunnyRanch recently recalled being told by her employer: “I could make a good living out here and that I'd be happy. I'd never go without a roof over my head. I'd never go hungry. I'd never go without money.”<sup>54</sup>

In today's times, using the Internet is a popular way to promote oneself as a licensed legal prostitute. During an ABC News examination of prostitution in the United States, journalist Diane Sawyer spoke with a high-paid sex worker at the Moonlite BunnyRanch whose Web site drew nearly 300,000 hits per month.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, illegal prostituted women in Nevada

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and elsewhere routinely “advertise themselves in the online red-light district under various aliases,” creating stiff competition for their licensed and regulated counterparts in the sex trade.<sup>55</sup>

### Male Legal Brothel Workers

With the licensed legal brothel workers in Nevada entirely female for decades, a gender equality breakthrough of sorts occurred in 2010, when the state allowed the Shady Lady Ranch legal brothel and its owner/madam, Bobbi Davis, to hire male prostitutes. Davis had argued that Nevada’s “prostitution regulations were outdated and discriminatory.”<sup>56</sup> She received support from the ACLU on the controversial move with opposition from the Nevada Brothel Owners Association, believing the move “could invite unwanted scrutiny and hurt the industry.”<sup>57</sup>

The one-time waiver granted to the Shady Lady Ranch on U.S. Highway 95, about two and a half hours from Las Vegas, required that male prostitutes undergo weekly urethral examinations in lieu of cervical exams, use condoms entirely as required by male customers, and submit to blood tests every month.

Davis advertised on the Internet in search of male prostitute prospects, similar to female prostitute recruits, with requirements that included: “Have a Good Work Ethic. Must Be Service Oriented. Have a Willingness to Please. Have a Positive Attitude.”<sup>58</sup> However, unlike the female prostitutes in her employ who were in “their mid-30s to mid-40s, based on her clientele of older gentlemen,” she sought male sex workers between 21 and 40 years of age.<sup>59</sup>

The Shady Lady Ranch hired its first male sex worker in January 2010. Though Davis anticipated that her male prostitutes would “primarily serve women and couples, the men [were] welcome to take on male clients, just as her women sometimes [did] with other women.”<sup>60</sup> However, former upper-level sex worker Tracy Quan believed that for Nevada’s licensed males in the sex trade, in terms of supporting themselves through prostitution, offering gay sexual services may well be

the inevitable next step: very few male prostitutes earn a living servicing women exclusively. In every income bracket, men are more capable and determined consumers of professional sex. Women have less experience—and less inclination as well. We aren’t 50% of the customer base and I doubt we ever will be.<sup>61</sup>

# EXHIBIT 9

**Ray Hager, Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center's Gilman has threatened Laxalt, used extortion-like tactics against him, Laxalt consultant says, NEVADA NEWSMAKERS  
(SEPT. 18, 2018)**

# EXHIBIT 9

## Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center's Gilman has threatened Laxalt, used extortion-like tactics against him, Laxalt consultant says

September 18, 2018 1 Comment Adam Paul Laxalt, Lance Gilman, Nevada Newsmakers, Ray Hagar, Steve Sisolak

**Editor's note:** This story is in response to an earlier Nevada Newsmakers story on developer Lance Gilman supporting Democrat Steve Sisolak for governor.

By Ray Hagar, Nevada Newsmakers

The campaign consultant for Republican Adam's Laxalt's gubernatorial campaign told Nevada Newsmakers that Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center developer Lance Gilman is using "extortionary" tactics against his candidate because Laxalt's attorney general's office would not charge Storey County Sheriff Gerald Antinoro with sexual harassment after an investigation.

Gilman, a longtime Republican appearing on Nevada Newsmakers Tuesday, said he was supporting Democrat Steve Sisolak for governor because Sisolak is adept at economic development. Gilman, a longtime Republican plus a Storey County commissioner and brothel owner, said the issue with Antinoro had nothing to do with his endorsement.

Yet Laxalt's campaign consultant, Robert Uithoven, said later Tuesday he believes Gilman's support for Sisolak is about the Antinoro controversy.

"For Lance Gilman, this is what I believe to be extortionary tactics on his part because he's just mad that the attorney general is not at his beck and call. No one has conducted a more thorough investigation of Sheriff Antinoro than the AG's office," said Uithoven.

Gilman has been using underhanded tactics against Laxalt, Uithoven said.

"This guy, Lance Gilman, has been doing everything he can to try to threaten the attorney general for months, whether it is sending messengers to try and intimidate the attorney general, or trying to force action from the top law enforcement officer of the state, without even a proper investigation, which now has been done," he said. "It is literally appalling what Lance Gilman has been up to this entire year and I believe it is extortionary."

"And, by the way, it is against the law for a public official, or anyone, to extort another public official in this state," Uithoven said.

Many agencies have investigated Antinoro's charges of sexual harassment charges and came up with the same conclusion as the attorney general, Uithoven said.

"This was brought to Adam Laxalt's predecessor and Catherine Cortez-Masto kicked it out of her office," Uithoven said. "The Sparks Police Department investigated this, the FBI has investigated this. And there are public records for everyone to see how much time and effort was taken in the attorney general's office in investigating this matter.

"And just because it doesn't turn out the way brothel owner Lance Gilman wants it to, doesn't mean that Adam Laxalt doesn't have businesses' support in Northern Nevada," Uithoven said. "He has tremendous support and it will show on election day."

Gilman, who appears to have some influence in state politics and the Trump Administration, is not speaking for the Northern Nevada business community, Uithoven said. Nor does Gilman speak for fellow TRIC developer Don Roger Norman and his son, Roger Norman Jr. The Normans hosted a fundraiser for Laxalt, Uithoven said.

"Lance, he tries to speak for everybody but he is only speaking for himself," Uithoven said.

Gilman stressed on Newsmakers his endorsement is not about the Antinoro issue:

"There will be many who say that (no investigation by the AG) is one of the elements we have looked at and they are very wrong," Gilman said about his support for Sisolak. "They are two separate issues completely."

Uithoven also bristled because he said Gilman insinuated Laxalt knows little about economic development.

"He (Gilman) said he (Laxalt) doesn't have any economic development plans," Uithoven said. "Do you think these job providers, the backbone of the economy in Northern Nevada, these leading executives in Northern Nevada would be supporting Adam Laxalt if they didn't have full faith and confidence in his ability to lead this state?"

"He (Laxalt) already is a statewide office holder, he already represents every state agency and his opponent (Sisolak) knows nothing but Clark County," Uithoven said.

Sisolak, a former university regent, is currently the chairman of the Clark County Commission.

Laxalt has tremendous support from the business community in Northern Nevada, Uithoven said.

"Despite what a brothel owner in Storey County says, we have tremendous support across Washoe County among the business community," Uithoven said. "And that has been well earned. I don't think there is a gaming executive in Northern Nevada who isn't supportive of Adam Laxalt's campaign, Alex Meruelo at the Grand Sierra, the Caranos have been incredibly supportive, the Farahis have been incredible supportive, contractors like Western Nevada Supply and the Reviglions have been very supportive."



# EXHIBIT 10

**Press Release, Mustang Ranch statement regarding fed. anti-brothel lawsuit (Feb. 25, 2019)**

# EXHIBIT 10

## Mustang Ranch statement regarding federal anti-brothel lawsuit

**(February 25, 2019)** –This morning, Mustang Ranch announced that it will be filing to intervene in the federal lawsuit filed by anti-brothel proponent Jason Guinasso. Guinasso's lawsuit, which has been filed against the State of Nevada, aims to criminalize prostitution throughout the state.

"Guinasso's actions will put thousands of women back into the hands of pimps working illegally," said Lance Gilman, real estate developer and owner of Mustang Ranch. "Every single worker at the Mustang Ranch is required to undergo an FBI fingerprint and criminal database background check every single year. The female entrepreneurs in the industry pay their taxes, support their family, buy their first homes, and pay their way through college or other educational courses. In over 4,000 work card applications filed over the last 20 years by working professionals and employees at the Mustang, not one has turned up to be a victim of trafficking. Not one," said Gilman. "Yet, Guinasso is going after these people, and completely ignoring the current problem."

"This will also hurt rural counties in Nevada by immediately removing tax and fee revenues out of their budgets," continued Gilman. "At the Mustang, we fund over \$100,000 year in charitable contributions locally, most to local seniors and we also sponsor a backpack food program for children from families in need in our County."

"This is a desperate act by Guinasso," said Gilman. "He knows this exact claim has been litigated before in this state and Nevada laws allowing licensed brothels have been repeatedly upheld. He lost badly in the court of public opinion in the recent election. His referendum lost by an 80% – 20% margin in Lyon County, even with the local Sheriff financing his anti-brothel effort. And he couldn't even get a vote in Nye County. Every single poll taken in the state by reputable polling firms, including polling within the last 8 months, confirms widespread support for brothels and regulated prostitution. He's trying to do an end run on the people of Nevada," said Gilman.

"Unfortunately, it's just another political stunt by this man. That's why he sent out his complaint to the media before it was even filed. This is all about him marketing and branding his position within his narrow political faction. As far as I know, Guinasso hasn't done one act to actually help the ladies working on the illegal side escape their pimps or ever taken action to stop handbilling of illegal prostitutes by pimps on the Las Vegas strip, prostitutes on the streets of Reno, and illegal sexual services in the massage parlors in the big cities in Nevada," said Gilman.

"His entire complaint is about illegal prostitution and trafficking, which has no relationship to licensed brothels in Nevada."

# # #

# EXHIBIT 11

**Daniel Rothberg, *In the county that claims Mark Twain, an irrelevant online publisher faces off with a powerful developer who is a journalist*, THE NEVADA INDEPENDENT (MAR. 17, 2019, 2:10A.M.)**

# EXHIBIT 11

# IN THE COUNTY THAT CLAIMS MARK TWAIN, AN IRREVERENT ONLINE PUBLISHER FACES OFF WITH A POWERFUL DEVELOPER OVER WHO IS A JOURNALIST



DANIEL ROTHBERG

MARCH 17TH, 2019 - 2:10AM

Sitting inside his cabin on a Friday afternoon, the tendentious Gold Hill editor Sam Toll sinks into a black office chair. His long hair sweeps the shoulders of his brown corduroy jacket. Toll rests his sunglasses on the brim of his cowboy hat. His bolo tie inches up and down as he speaks.

On one side of Toll's coat, a Nixon pin. On the other side, a Carter pin. Toll, who might as well have popped out of a Thomas Pynchon novel, sits behind a Cuba flag and a photograph of Fidel Castro meeting Ernest Hemingway, a writer he says was an influence along with George Orwell and Christopher Hitchens. This is the newsroom of the *Storey Teller*, an often derisive blog run by Toll that is at the center of a libel case testing how far Nevada law goes to protect journalists.

His yellow cabin — with a sign that says “Old Miner’s Cabin BUILT 1867” — sits in the small community of Gold Hill, adjacent and underneath Virginia City, the seat of Storey County.

“But to answer your question,” he said during an interview. “Do I throw grenades? Absolutely. When I see fraud, waste, abuse, cronyism, lying, double-standard in rules,

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*Sam Toll, the publisher of the Storey Teller, at his Gold Hill cabin on March 1, 2019. (David Calvert/The Nevada Independent)*

The story of Toll is a complicated tale fueled by the heated public feuds and factions that have existed in Virginia City since the discovery of the Comstock Lode (the credit for which is itself disputed). It is a story about the First Amendment and press freedom. But it is also a story of a rural sheriff and #MeToo. It is about the norms, in 2019, of where journalism ends and politics begin. But it is also about a story questioning the residency of a county commissioner and a brothel owner credited for moving the region to a new bonanza near the Comstock: Big Tech.

“You’ll see this when you read the blog, that their whole focus was attack on my person, on the businesses I was involved in, on my credibility. It was vile, the things

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Earlier this year, the judge dismissed most of Gilman's claims. Carson City Judge James Wilson noted that Toll's often irreverent style — what case law calls “lusty and imaginative expressions of contempt” — did not amount to defamation in and of itself. (Toll once wrote satire imagining “Glance ‘The Thrill’ Thrillman” opening up a petting zoo at the brothel). But the judge sided with Gilman on one claim. Wilson said that articles challenging Gilman's residence were potentially defamatory, and the judge allowed Gilman to conduct discovery to prove they were.

When Gilman wanted to find out the sources for Toll's stories, Toll asserted Nevada's shield law, which protects reporters from revealing who they received information from. The court was then forced to grapple with the question: Is Toll, the irreverent Gold Hill blogger, a news reporter?

\*\*\*

For Toll, the *Storey Teller* is personal. “I didn't set foot in [Virginia City] for almost 20 years,” he said. Toll said the police pulled him over three times and stripped his car. “Oh, Toll, there's got to be some weed in here somewhere,” he said the cops would say. “Surely, you dropped a roach.”

“I'm like, ‘Get a warrant,’” Toll recounted. “They're like, ‘OK, we'll get a warrant.’”

“And after the third time, I'm like, ‘Fuck this place,’ Toll said of why he left Storey County for so many years after growing up in Gold Hill. I'm never setting foot in here again as long as I live.”

Toll said he hasn't smoked weed in years. Born in 1962, he did smoke weed growing up. And it was around that time that weed and journalism converged in Reno to form the basis of Nevada's shield law, the statute that the grenade-throwing blogger is now waving around as fortification.

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Sam Toll, editor of the Storey Teller, left, and Lance Gilman, Storey County commissioner. (David Calvert/The Nevada Independent)

It started when a journalist named Warren Lerude, then the young editor of the *Reno Evening Gazette*, published a silhouetted photo of UNR students smoking pot. Then-Washoe County District Attorney Bill Raggio requested Lerude reveal the identities of the pictured students. When Lerude refused to reveal them, Raggio threatened him and his reporters with jail time.

Lerude pushed for the introduction of Nevada's shield law when the Legislature met that next year, according to a [history compiled in a 2014 master's thesis](#). The shield

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*The building that used to house the Territorial Enterprise, the paper where Samuel Clemens started using the pen name Mark Twain. (David Calvert/The Nevada Independent)*

That new law protected journalists from revealing sensitive sources. Good journalists try to rely mostly on named sources because it bolsters credibility. But there are regularly situations in which important news can only be reported by using anonymous sources who might fear retaliation or might be prevented from speaking because they work for the government.

Lerude said the law was intended to be broad — to apply to all who were doing newsgathering.

“In my view, the shield law covers newspaper,” he said in an interview last week.

“—”

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"The question ought not to be: Is the person institutionally affiliated in a way that makes them a journalist? Do they work for the right organization? Do they have a credential that makes them a journalist?" said Patrick File, a professor studying media law at UNR. "We get to a more fruitful definition by defining journalism by its function. Again, that process and that relationship."

File, who Toll selected as an expert witness in the case, said the shield law was meant to protect all reporters. Because the judge canceled a hearing on the issue, File never testified.

Wilson, the Carson City judge, took a different approach. He said Toll was a reporter.

But in a ruling last week, he took a narrow interpretation of the shield law. Wilson said it did not apply to online publishers who were not affiliated with a "newspaper" or a "press association." If upheld, the ruling, media experts said, could weaken Nevada's shield law, leaving questions about whether the tough statute applies to online publications, freelancers and documentarians.

Media experts said this interpretation is off, noting that "press association" is an anachronism for wire services. They said the statute was intended to cover all journalists, not just those affiliated with an organization or who can afford to pay dues to the Nevada Press Association. Although it deviates from another District Court ruling, File said Wilson's order could give journalists pause.

"It serves to potentially create a chilling effect for anyone who does journalism and doesn't publish it in a newspaper," File told The Nevada Independent in a follow-up interview. "Any of the state's online news sites would be forgiven for being a little concerned if they gather work product they don't intend to publish or they have sources that fear retaliation."

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